

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5653
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L Q U I T O 3 5 5 8

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINR, EC, PE

SUBJECT: PRAISE OF "PERUVIAN REVOLUTION" DELICATE MATTER IN ECUADOR

1. DURING A RECENT VISIT TO LIMA TO ATTEND THE LAST MEETING OF MINISTERS OF LABOR OF ANDEAN PACT COUNTRIES, THE ECUADOREAN MINISTER OF LABOR, DR. RAMIRO LARREA SANTOS, WAS QUOTED IN A PERUVIAN NEWSPAPER AS STATING THAT THE "PERUVIAN REVOLUTION" WAS "THE DESIRE AND ASPIRATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN PEOPLES". THIS STATEMENT WAS SEIZED UPON BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS AMONG, WE ARE TOLD, THE GUAYAQUIL ENTREPRENEURIAL GROUP WHO OPPOSE THE MINISTER BECAUSE OF HIS SOCIALLY MINDED CONDUCT OF THE MINISTRY, TO ACCUSE HIM OF SYMPATHY WITH THE GOALS (UNDESCRIBED) OF THE PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH THEY CALL A "SOCIALIST DICTATORSHIP IMPOSED ON THE PEOPLE OF PERU". THIS WAS DONE BY PRINTING AS A PAID ADVERTISEMENT IN THE PRINCIPAL ECUADOREAN PAPERS THE TEXT OF THE ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN EL PERUANO APRIL 17, 1975. SINCE THEN THE MINISTER HAS CONTINUED UNDER ATTACK NOT ONLY FOR HIS SUPPOSED SYMPATHY FOR THE PERUVIAN EXPERIMENT BUT, LINKED WITH THAT, HIS ALLEGEDLY ONE-SIDED INTERVENTIONS IN LABOR CONFLICTS AND THE APRIL 30 WAGE DECREE, WHICH WAS LATER REVISED BECAUSE OF ITS COMPLEXITY AND OTHER ASPECTS (SEE QUITO 3308).

2. THE MINISTER REACTED BY CRITICIZING WHAT HE CALLED

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PAGE 02 QUITO 03558 222253Z

UNJUSTIFIED POLITICAL ATTACKS ON HIMSELF BY PERSONS WHO WOULD NOT IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AND DENIED HAVING

SAID WHAT WAS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM. HE AFFIRMED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NATIONALIST REVOLUTION WHICH ECUADOR WAS CARRYING OUT IN ITS OWN WAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH WHAT HE CALLED THE REALITIES OF PRESENT DAY LIFE IN THE COUNTRY. HE DEFENDED HIS OWN VALUES, WITHOUT DEFINING THEM, BY REFERRING TO HIS TWENTY YEARS EXPERIENCE AS A LAWYER, PROFESSOR AND POLITICIAN DURING WHICH TIME HE HAD MADE THEM EXPLICIT TIME AND TIME AGAIN.

3. COMMENT: THE MINISTER'S REACTION PROBABLY REFLECTS THE GOE'S CONCERN OVER HAVING INTERNAL POLITICAL EVOLUTION HERE IDENTIFIED WITH ANY FOREIGN MODEL, AS WELL AS THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL NEED TO DEFEND HIMSELF. RECENT CHARGES BY TRADITIONAL POLITICANS THAT GOE IS INFILTRATED BY COMMUNISTS (SEE QUITO 1651) MAY HAVE GIVEN RISE TO A SPECIAL SENSITIVITY TOWARD ANY INSINUATION THAT ECUADOR'S MODEL COULD BE PERU, IN WHOSE GOVERNMENT COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IS HERE BELIEVED TO BE STRONG. APART FROM THAT, THE MINISTER HAS MADE HIS PERSONAL VIEWS CLEAR TO EMBASSY OFFICERS WHEN HE CRITICIZED MANY ENTREPRENEURS AS PTERODACTYL PRACTITIONERS OF LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS AND TRADE UNION LEADERS AS OFTEN IRRESPONSIBLE PERSONS WHO FAIL TO RECOGNIZE THAT PRODUCTIVITY IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF BETTER WAGES AND CONDITIONS. HE IS DETERMINED TO PLAY A MIDDLE ROLE BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND LABOR.

4. BUT APART FROM THE ABOVE, THE MINISTER'S REACTION REVEALS THAT IN HIS JUDGMENT MOST ECUADOREANS HOLD A LOW OPINION OF THE PERUVIAN EXPERIMENT.

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